



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/829,162	04/22/2004	Hirofumi Dodoro	K06-169665M/TBS	5745
21254	7590	08/07/2006	EXAMINER	
MCGINN INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW GROUP, PLLC			YEE, DEBORAH	
8321 OLD COURTHOUSE ROAD			ART UNIT \ PAPER NUMBER	
SUITE 200			1742	
VIENNA, VA 22182-3817			DATE MAILED: 08/07/2006	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/829,162	Applicant(s) DODORO ET AL.	
	Examiner Deborah Yee	Art Unit 1742	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 June 2006.
 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 2 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 2 is/are rejected.
 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 6-06-06 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka et al (US Patent 5,998,042) or Tanaka et al (US Patent 6,086,686).

4. Tanaka '042 on lines 45-55 of column 6 and Tanaka '686 on lines 25-54 in column 6 disclose a bearing steel alloy having a composition with constituents whose wt% ranges overlap those recited by claim 1; such overlap in wt% ranges establishes a prima facie case of obviousness because it would be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to select the claimed alloy wt% ranges over the broader disclosure of the prior art

since the same utility (roller bearing) and similar properties (excellent acoustic characteristics) are taught, see MPEP 2144.05.

5. More specifically note Tanaka '042 steel examples N to R in Table 3 of column 22 and Tanaka '686 steel examples a, d, e and f in table 16 of column 41 meet the claimed composition except for slightly higher amounts of Cr. It would, however, be obvious to lower Cr since a broad range of 10 –22%Cr is taught. Moreover, since applicant has not demonstrated criticality of the claimed Cr range of 5 to 10% (e.g. by comparative test data), then a composition with 10%Cr vs. a composition with slightly more Cr (say 12.12%) would depict a mere difference in the proportion of element without any attendant unexpected results which would not patentably distinguish claims over prior art.

6. Moreover, Tanaka'042 on lines 45-60 in column 17 and Tanaka'686, lines 1-9 in column 26 disclose producing steel bearing in the same manner as recited by claim 1 comprising the steps of austenitizing, oil quenching, subzero cooling and tempering.

7. Also Tanaka'042, Table 4A in column 23 and Tanaka'686, Table 17 of column disclose steel having a hardness value of at least HRC57 and hence meet claim 2.

Response to Arguments

8. Applicant's arguments filed 6-06-06 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. It was argued that prior art does not teach or suggest damping steel including 0.09 to 0.15% N. It is the examiner's position that Tanaka'042 steel examples

N to R in Table 3 of column 22 and Tanaka'686 steel examples a, d, e and f in Table 16 of column 41 contain N in amounts within the claimed N range of 0.09 to 0.15%.

9. It was argued that Tanaka '042 teaches 0.05 to less than 0.2%N and Tanaka'686 teaches 0.05 to 0.19%N which are broader than the claimed N range of 0.09 to 0.15%, and the criticality of the more narrowly claimed range is established in Table 1 on page 8 of applicant's specification. It is the examiner's position that the data in applicant's specification is ineffective because comparative examples contain no N, and therefore not representative of the closest prior art examples. Also note that prior art specific examples (as mentioned in paragraph 8) contain N amounts within applicant's claimed N range. Hence claims would not patentably distinguish over prior art.

Conclusion

10. This is a request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114a. All claims are drawn to the same invention claimed in the earlier application and could have been finally rejected on the grounds and art of record in the next Office action if they had been entered in the earlier application. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL** even though it is a first action in this case. See MPEP § 706.07(b). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the

Art Unit: 1742

shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no, however, event will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Deborah Yee whose telephone number is 571-272-1253. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 6:00 to 2:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Roy King can be reached on 571-272-1244. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Deborah Yee
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1742

dy